

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 25, 2008

General Michael Moseley
Chief of Staff
United States Air Force
1160 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330

Dear General Moseley:

Thanks for the opportunity to visit at breakfast Wednesday morning.

As you know, our Congressional Delegation has been a strong supporter of the Air Force's initiatives, and we remain very proud of the fact that we have two major Air Force installations in our state.

But, we are writing to follow up on a discussion we had yesterday morning about the proposal to privatize housing at North Dakota's Air Force bases and several other bases in our region.

As we understand it, the Air Force is pursuing a plan that would take the housing stock at our existing air bases and turn it over free of charge to private contractors that would then contract to the Air Force to maintain the base housing for the next fifty years. Following that transaction, the Air Force would pay a housing allowance to the airmen living in base housing, just as if they were living in private, off-base housing. Each airman's housing allowance would then be used to pay rent to the private contractor.

As you know, the Minot and Grand Forks Air Force bases have a substantial amount of new housing stock. In fact, it is some of the best base housing at any military installation in the world.

We do not support the Air Force's plan to sign away its taxpayer-funded housing to a private entity for fifty years at no cost.

We understand this is part of the Defense Department-wide privatization strategy. We also understand this strategy has had significant problems at a number of other bases around the country.

We don't see how this approach to privatizing housing at the Minot and Grand Forks Air Force bases will save the government money and we fail to see how any company is going to be able to sign a contract offering the Air Force fifty years of performance after they have been provided hundreds of millions of dollars of assets free of charge in the first year.

In short, we don't believe that this privatization plan is in the public's interest. We don't think it serves the Air Force's interests or the American tax payer's interests. And we wanted to let you know that we intend to do all that we can to keep North Dakota bases from being part of the expected 2009 contract that the Air Force is working on to privatize this housing.

Finally, we recognize this program was started before you assumed your current position, and in fact this program is a Pentagon-wide program, not just an Air Force program. But we wanted to be straight up with you to tell you that we do not support this program and we are going to try and stop it. We are proud of the housing that has been constructed on our military bases. It serves our Airmen well and we believe this proposed privatization plan is neither in the public's interests nor in the interest of our airmen.

General Moseley, in closing, we want to thank you again for our meeting Wednesday morning. We appreciate your outstanding leadership for the Air Force and we look forward to continuing to work with you on the important missions of the Air Force.

Sincerely,

		
Byron L. Dorgan U.S. Senator	Kent Conrad U.S. Senator	Earl Pomeroy U.S. House